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## Senate

The Senate met at 11 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray. Eternal God, we love You, for You are our strength and fortress. Lord, You are worthy of our praise. We thank You for showing yourself faithful to all who put their trust in You. Continue to sustain our lawmakers with Your strong right hand.

Lord, equip and empower them by Your Heavenly grace that they may be adequate for these momentous times. Use them as Your instruments to bring decency, justice, and mercy to our Nation and world.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

### MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KAINE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

### VOTING RIGHTS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, last night was a reminder of a difficult but important reality of our great democracy: The march to freedom, through thick and thin, is never over—and we have to keep marching.

While last night's vote was disappointing, it will not deter Senate Democrats from continuing our fight against voter suppression, dark money, and partisan gerrymandering. Democrats are proud of the fight we held last night. The strength, eloquence, enthusiasm, and overwhelming participation of my Democratic colleagues during debate was exhilarating and shows the passion we feel about this issue.

Facing an uphill battle from the start, we lost the vote. But to have not voted would have been a far greater loss, a loss for our Democratic Party, which for generations has stood for voting rights; a loss for the civil rights advocates who have sacrificed so much on this issue; and a loss for the American people and what this country stands for. On an issue this important, not doing everything we could would have been unacceptable.

Now, the bromides of the beltway class hold we should not have held a vote on voting rights if the outcome was not certain. They are wrong. Imagine telling Dr. King not to march from Selma to Montgomery because he could not be sure what obstacles awaited him and his fellow freedom fighters.

Imagine telling John Lewis he should never have crossed the Pettus Bridge because it was unclear what perils awaited him on the other side.

Every Member of this body who has ever invoked these great titans of freedom has an obligation—an obligation—to uphold their legacies not just with words but with actions. Senators were elected to vote. The examples of Dr. King, of John Lewis inspire us, give us strength, and show us that sometimes the only right option is to move forward.

And we need to remember what this is about. With the advent of Donald Trump and his many Big Lies, with the January 6 insurrection, with the vicious acts of voter suppression throughout the States, and with the greedy dark money interests that fuel the Republican Party these days, this is a fight for the soul of America—nothing less. So Democrats will not shy away from an uphill fight; we will continue to face them.

And I believe that the lessons of history are clear: When Representatives have to take a stand, when they have to show to the American people where they are on the issues, the right side of history ultimately prevails. We know history is on the side of voting rights, and we know that forcing leaders to take stands will ultimately move the ball forward.

Now, finally, I want to thank all my colleagues who came to the floor yesterday to speak valiantly in defense of voting rights and for working assiduously for months on this vital issue: Senators KLOBUCHAR and MERKLEY, BOOKER, SCHATZ, Senator KAINE—you, Mr. President—Senators KING, TESTER, WARNOCK, OSSOFF, DURBIN, PADILLA, LEAHY—and so many, so many more. Their leadership, their expertise, and their dedication to protecting our democracy is inspiring. It gives our caucus strength, and it made such a difference. Last night was unusual and exhilarating because we fought the good fight.

• This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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